

### REMARKS

This is in full and timely response to the final Office action mailed November 19, 2004. Reexamination and reconsideration in light of the foregoing amendments and following remarks is respectfully solicited.

Upon entry of this amendment, Claims 1-4, 6-8, 16, 17, and 20-23 will remain pending in the application, with Claims 1, 16, and 22 being the independent claims. Claims 1, 6, 7, 16, and 20-22 have been amended, and Claims 5, 9-15, 18, 19, and 24 have been canceled herein. No new matter is believed to have been entered.

### Claim Rejections/Objections

Claims 1-4, 9, 10, 12-17, 22, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,809,021 (Diaz et al.), Claims 11, 18, 20 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Diaz et al., and Claims 5-8, 19, and 24, while directed to allowable subject matter, were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim.

In response, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 16, and 22 to include at least those features of dependent Claims 5, 19, and 24 that were indicated as being allowable. Hence, the rejections under §§ 102 and 103 are mooted, as are the outstanding claim objections.

### Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicants earnestly believed the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 is respectfully requested.

Moreover, entry and consideration of this Amendment are proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 for at least the following reasons. The present Amendment places the application in condition for allowance. Applicants do not believe that the present Amendment raises new

issues requiring further search or consideration. Therefore, entry and consideration of the present Amendment are proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 and are hereby requested.

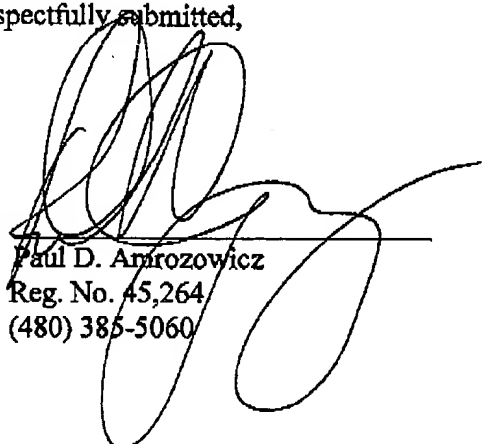
If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

If for some reason Applicant has not paid a sufficient fee for this response, please consider this as authorization to charge Ingrassia, Fisher & Lorenz, Deposit Account No. 50-2091 for any fee which may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: January 21, 2005

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